now handled by the CRPF would be taken over by the State Police, and some battalions of the CRPF could be withdrawn for deployment in other areas.

Purchase of defective ammunition and machineries

*368. SHRTMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:
SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) has indicted the Ministry for purchasing 'Defective Quality ammunition and machineries', which has had adverse impact on operational preparedness of the army;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof;

(c) whether it has also been found that top army commanders have misused their special financial powers; and

(d) if so, the facts thereof and steps taken by Government to bring transparency in the procurement of defence purchases?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Comptroller & Auditor General's Report No.CA 17 of 2008-2009, in Para 2.2 refers to the case of "Import of defective ammunition". The said para contains audit observations on the 155mm Krasnopol ammunition procured as per contracts signed in 1999 and 2002.

An Agreement to Contract No. KBP 615612072 on repair/rectification of the 155mm Krasnopol Projectiles procured in 1999 and another Agreement to Contract No. KBP 615612073 on modified 155mm Krasnopol Projectiles firing tests aimed at settlement of the quality claim pertaining to the projectiles supplied under the contract of 2002 have been signed with the supplier, M/s KBP, Tula. Russia in November 2008. Under these Agreements, repair/rectification of Projectiles by replacement of fuze, and the firing tests are to be carried out at the supplier's own expense.

CAG Report No.CA 17 of 2008-2009 also contains Para No.3.6 on the "Misuse of special financial powers by Army Commanders". The Government takes appropriate action on audit observations raised by the CAG.

The provisions incorporated in Defence Procurement Procedure-2008 for achieving transparency in acquisition include, interalia: (i) An 'Integrity Pact' between the Government department and the bidder for all contracts above Rs.100 crore; (ii) Enhanced transparency in the conduct of field trials; (iii) Pre-bid meetings with vendors; (iv) Prohibiting the use of undue influence by the seller for obtaining any contract with the Government; (v) Prohibiting the engagement of any individual or firm to recommend to the Government the award of a contract to the seller and the payment of any amount in respect of any such recommendation.

Lifting ban on export of wheat

†*369. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether Government has lifted the ban on export of wheat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether lifting of ban has resulted in reduction in rising prices;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the further steps Government proposes to take in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) and (b) In pursuance of the Empowered Group of Ministers decision dated 5/3/2009, the Government had vide Notification No. 115-(RE-2009)/2004-2009 dated 3rd July, 2009 lifted the ban on export of wheat, for export of 3 lakh MTs each through MMTC, PEC and STC upto 31/3/2010. However, keeping in view the progress of Monsoon and the need to conserve foodgrain stocks within the country, the decision was reconsidered by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and the permission allowed for export of wheat through MMTC, STC and PEC was withdrawn vide Notification No. 117(RE-2009)/2004-2009 dated 13 July, 2009.

(c) and (d) The lifting of ban vide Notification No. 115-(RE-2009)/2004-2009 dated 3rd July, 2009, or the withdrawal of export permission vide Notification No. 117(RE-2009)/2004-2009 dated 13 July, 2009 did not have any impact on domestic market price situation.

(e) The Government is regularly monitoring the situation and would take appropriate need based measure.

Upgradation of Bilimora-Chikhli-Vansda-Waghai-Ahwa-Chinchli road in Gujarat

*370. SHRI KANJIBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Gujarat Government has submitted a proposal for upgradation of Bilimora-Chikhli-Vansda-Waghai-Ahwa-ChinchliRoad;

(b) if so, the current status of the proposal; and

(c) by when the proposal is likely to be approved?

THE MINISTER OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) to (c) This Ministry has not received any such proposal from Government of Gujarat for declaration as National Highways. Due to resource constrants, priority is being given for development of roads already declared as National Highways instead of declaring more roads as National Highways and as such, there is no proposal to declare any new National Highway in Gujarat at present.

Joblessness due to global economic meltdown

*371. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of job-seekers in the whole country as per records of the employment exchanges in different States of the country;

(b) among these job-seekers, how many are having professional qualifications;

(c) the number of persons turned jobless during 2008-09 and 2009-10 on account of global economic meltdown and recession; and

(d) the course of action Government proposes to pursue to rehabilitate those who lost jobs in the country?